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Outstanding People!

By Barb Beckett

I have worked for the Grand Traverse Bay YMCA for over 25 years. Over that time, I have seen many people come and go. Some have participated in our programs. Some have participated in our programs and now are coaching/leading those same programs. Some are lifelong members of the Y. It is a the blessing to see the number of people who have grown in building a healthy spirit, mind and body here at the Y.

I remember a basketball player in one of our leagues. I first met him at Kalkaska High School while he was a student athlete there. I officiated many of his high school games and knew he would have great success upon graduation. Chuck Schuba has played in our Y Adult Basketball Leagues for many years after his college days were over. He became a coach and a leader.

Derek Bailey participated in our YMCA Basketball program over the years and is currently the Chair of the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. The Y shares his concern for youth development and fitness. He epitomizes the qualities that we instill at the Y.

I remember Greg Shirwin when he was in YMCA Pop Warner Football and I later met him when he was a Pop Warner coach. His ideals and standards for the Y Pop Warner program are higher than the national standard. His ability to be a positive role model and to get the kids to learn and respond has propelled many players through their school ranks as excellent football players and men.

Over the years we have had some great instructors. Rebecca Costello is currently our instructor for Pee Wee Sports. In the past she has done gymnastics, basketball skills and soccer. Rebecca has four children of her own and still finds time to guide our young athletes. It is truly amazing how she is able to work with the 3 to 5 year olds, teaching them the basics of sports and leading them on a path of lifelong learning and enjoying sports.

I was pleased to see that Wally Bruder, 92, and long time member and tennis player at this Y, has just renewed his membership for another year. Wally still plays mornings with his foursome at the Y.

The list of people could go on and on and on. The Y, through its programs, has impacted children's, families' and senior's lives. Thousands of people have been rewarded by their volunteer work. This winter we continue to offer our 65 programs in developing healthy body, mind and spirit. Check out our program offerings at www.gtbayymca.org .